

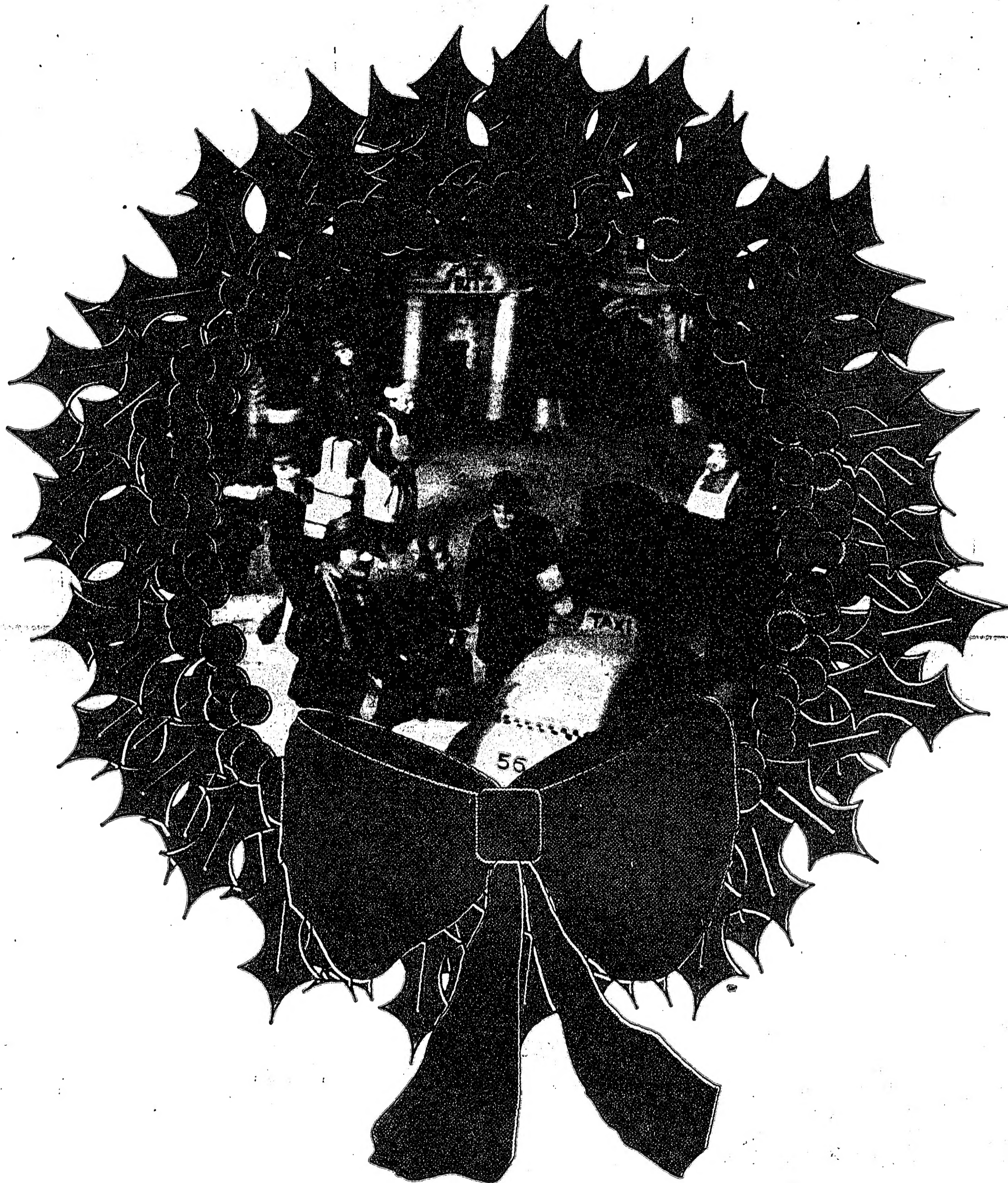
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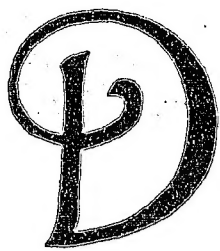
GATEWAY

UNIVERSITY OF
NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

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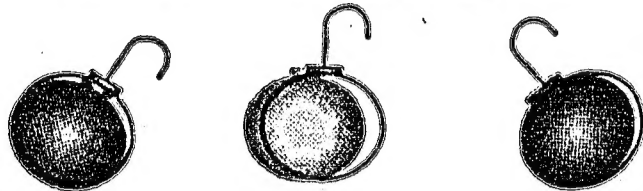
1991 Special Holiday Issue



Dear Readers,
To celebrate the season, we have brought to you the **Gateway Special Holiday Issue.**

We certainly hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you.

Sincerely,
The 1991 Fall **Gateway** Staff



Front page art

- Miniature village courtesy of Makin's.
- Photo by Ed Carlson
- Computer graphics by Gateway production staff

Inside this issue:

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- Interested in seeing a movie? Five of the 1991 holiday releases reviewed — **pages 6-7**
- Students visiting this country talk about the holidays — **page 9**
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- Mannheim Steamroller gears up for yet another popular holiday concert tour — **page 2A**
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- Holiday compact disc, Lump of Coal, reviewed — **page 6A**
- Living with holiday depression can be difficult — **page 7A**

GATEWAY

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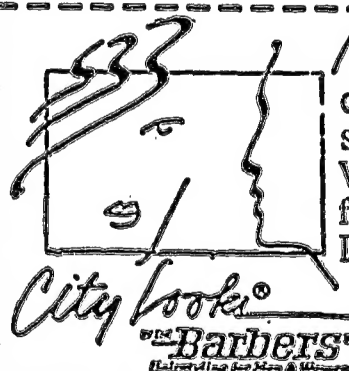
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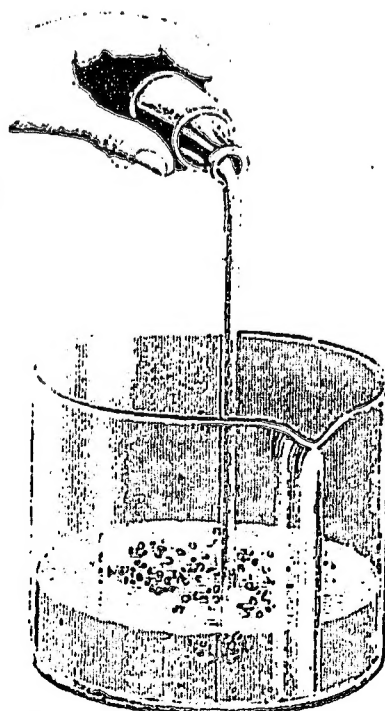
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Hanukkah not related to Christmas

The Hebrew word Chanukah or Hanukkah means dedication and is celebrated by Jews across the world. Hanukkah week is considered a "Festival of Lights," and a candle is lit every night for eight nights. During Hanukkah families celebrate by eating traditional foods, singing Hanukkah songs, and giving gifts. Children receive a small gift for each night of Hanukkah or may receive one big gift for the holiday.

"Hanukkah gets confused with Christmas because they have similarities in how they are celebrated and because they fall at the same time of year," said Barbara Chandler, public relations director for the Jewish Federation of Omaha.

"But they have no biblical or historical connection," she said.

The Jewish Community Center of Omaha's newsletter, "Centerpiece," gave the following explanation of the events leading to Hanukkah:

The story of Hanukkah took place over 2,000 years ago when the Jewish people of Palestine were ruled by King Antiochus of Syria. King Antiochus forbade Jews from practicing their religion freely and tried to force them to follow the teaching of the Greek religion.

When the Jews disobeyed the King by continuing their religious practices, the Syrian armies desecrated the Jewish temple in Jerusalem and dedicated it to the Greek god Zeus.

Judah Macabee and his four brothers led the fight against the Syrian armies and after a miraculous victory, they set to work rebuilding and cleansing the temple.

In addition to destroying the altar

The lights in the menorah signify the burning of the eternal light

of the temple, the Syrian armies also destroyed all but one small jug of oil, hardly enough to burn for one day. The oil was needed for lighting the temple menorah, which is now referred to as the Eternal Light. The Eternal Light burned 24 hours a day to remind people that God was always with them. It would take the Jews eight days to make the new, pure oil needed for the temple dedication.

With the few drops of oil left, the Jews lit the Eternal Light. Although there was only enough to burn for one day, the oil burned for eight days.

To commemorate this great miracle, Jews annually kindle the lights of a menorah for eight days beginning on the 25th

day of the Hebrew month of Kislev.

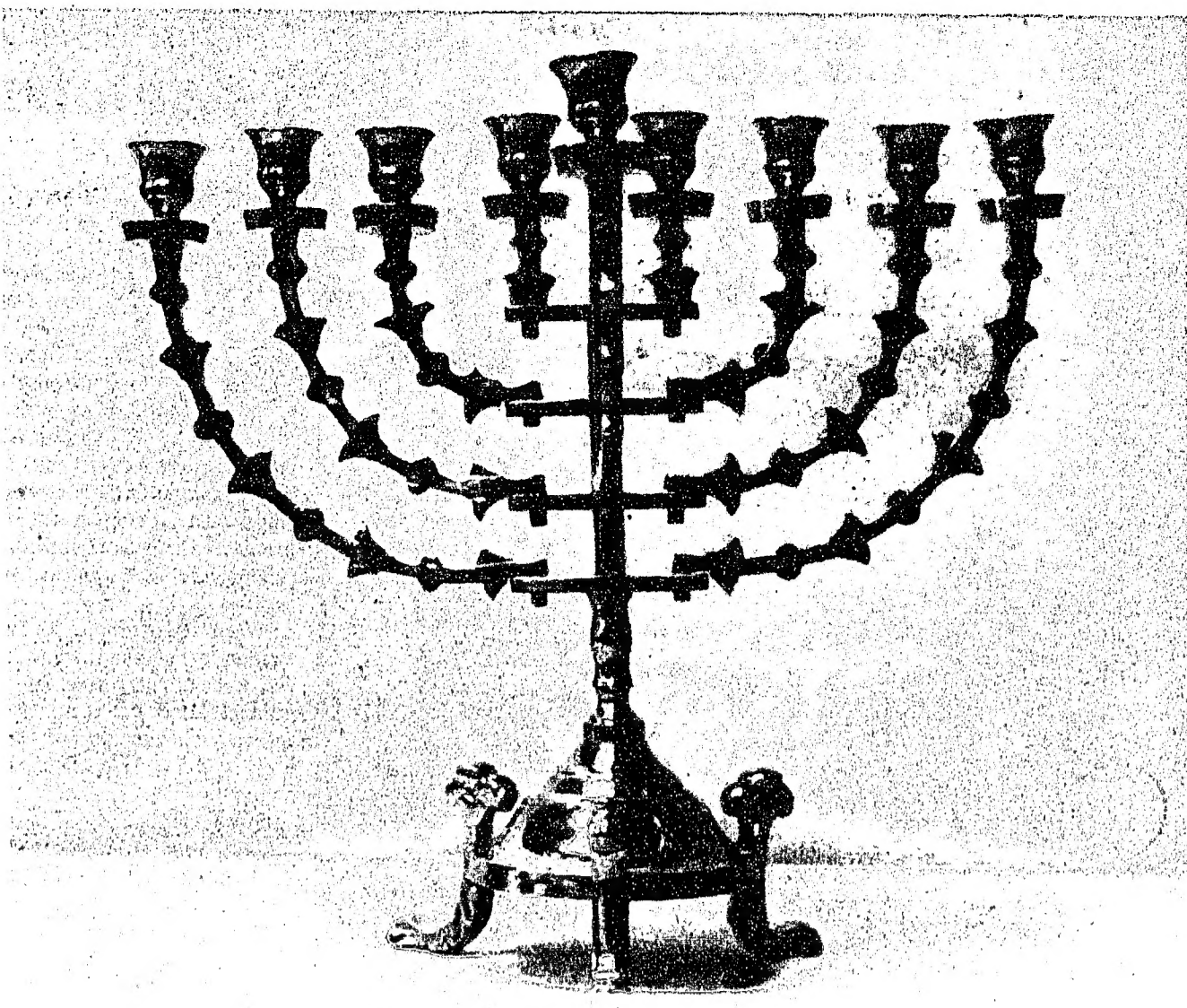
According to Gary Bernstein, associate executive director of the Jewish Community Center, Hanukkah is a minor holiday when compared to other Jewish holidays.

"It's tough for Jewish children because we live in a non-Jewish world," he said.

"People need to realize that Hanukkah has nothing to do with Christmas," Chandler said. "It is not the equivalent."

Chandler said Hanukkah is an important time for families. "It's a time to be together and have fun as a family."

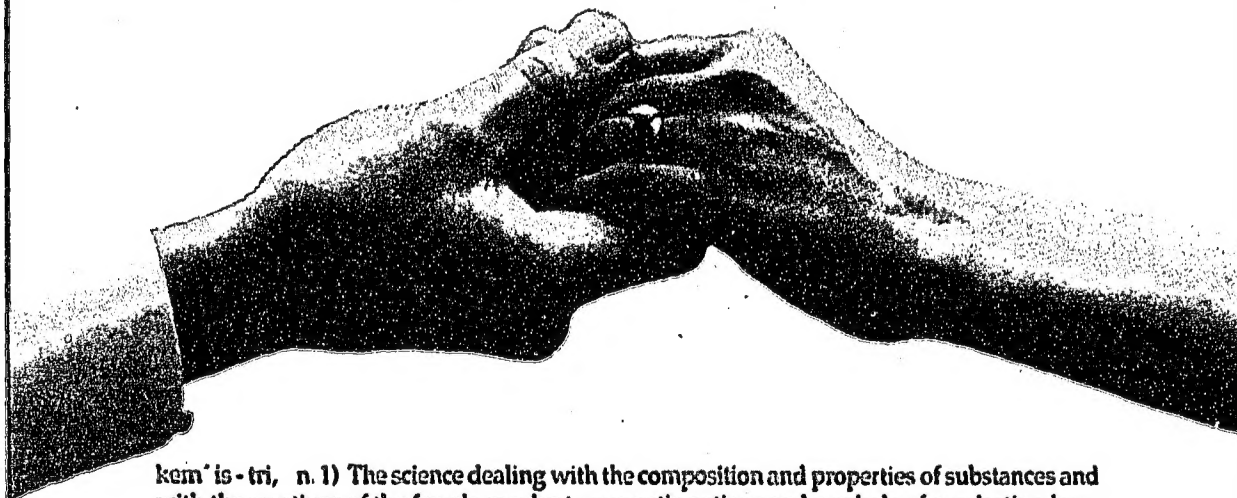
—Amy Bull



—File photo



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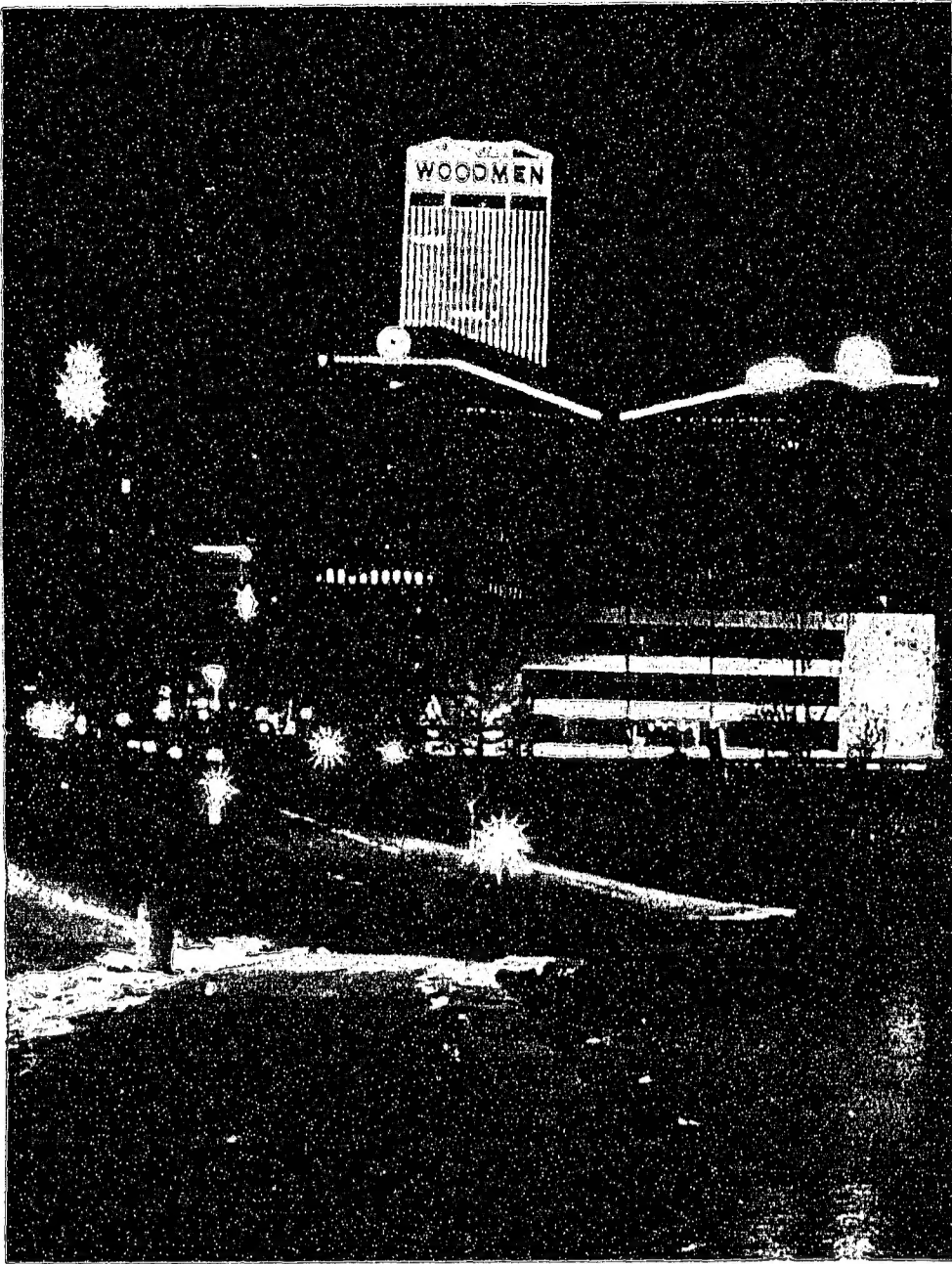
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—Ed Carlson

Downtown Omaha decked out for Christmas.

Christmas still visits downtown Downtown celebrates season

W

all have special childhood memories.

One of mine is Christmas shopping in downtown Omaha with my mother.

I remember getting on the bus early in the morning with excited anticipation of finding wonderful treasures for my family.

When we got on the bus it was usually empty, only because our stop was at the beginning of the line. Before long, the bus became full with other parents and children with the same anticipation as mine.

When we got off on 16th Street, a beautiful fairyland of lights and trees welcomed us. What used to be ordinary street lights were now red and white candy canes. A huge Christmas tree, decked out in a rainbow of colors, hung above every intersection proclaiming the beauty of the season.

My mother and I usually started our delightful journey in the Brandeis store. We rushed to the 10th floor so I could be first in line to see Santa. Later, we had the best lunch in town in Brandeis' Hamburger Heaven.

Then, it was on to Woolworth's and Penney's. You could actually walk from the Brandeis basement underneath Douglas Street over to those two stores. Of course, my mother and I always walked outside. A little boy has to have some snow on him.

There was also Kilpatrick's (now Younkers), The Nebraska clothing store, and way down around 10th Street, The Fair.

Today, that magical fairyland is gone. Or is it?

True, the major department stores have left downtown. But isn't that Christmas caroling I hear down in the Old Market?

And look at all those lights around the Central Park Mall entrance.

Maybe Christmas hasn't forgotten downtown.

Despite the exodus of the major stores, there are still a wide variety of Christmas activities for families to enjoy downtown, said John Yochum, manager of Downtown Omaha, Inc., a branch of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce.

"For example, on Dec. 6, 7 and 8 we will have 'Dickens in the Market.' This will feature various chorus groups dressed up in the fashions during the Charles Dickens era performing in the Old Market," he said. "And now through Dec. 22, at the Western Heritage Museum, there will be 'Christmas at Union Station' featuring a 50-foot tree and carolers on each Saturday and Sunday."

Yochum said the Orpheum Theater will also feature numerous Christmas musicals this year.

"The Omaha Symphony will perform 'The Magic of Christmas' on Dec. 19 through Dec. 22. The Omaha Ballet will perform 'The Nutcracker' on Dec. 12, through Dec. 15, and Mannheim Steamroller will perform Christmas concerts from Dec. 26 through Dec. 31. These are all Omaha traditions," Yochum said.

Christmas lighting is still evident downtown, he said.

"We put up clear bulbs in the trees in the first block of the Central Park Mall, as well as on 16th Street," Yochum said. "And with the help of the Building Owners Managers Association, we've put up lights on the rooftops of some of the more notable buildings."

He said 12 buildings are lit up each night during the holiday season and possibly three more buildings will be lit up next year.

Yochum said downtown Omaha is still home for a large number of retailers and restaurants.

"We have about 180 retailers and 65 restaurants, mostly in the Old Market. It's more unique shopping nowadays," he said.

Gift shops geared toward office workers are now the main stores on 16th Street, Yochum said.

"It isn't the same anymore (16th Street.) It's definitely a changed environment," he said.

"Most workers don't have a one-hour lunch period anymore, so they don't have as much time to shop. And they don't stay downtown after work. But when people ask me about what's going on downtown, I tell them about all the different shops and restaurants that are available here."

Apparently memories are still being made here.

—Tim Rohwer

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Lava lamps and moose slippers

H

oliday shoppers have many new and unusual gifts to choose from this season, according to merchants at the Westroads shopping mall.

Star Trek tree ornaments commemorating the television show's 25th anniversary are a popular item among shoppers, said Jane Sader, Hallmark manager at the Coach House.

The ornaments are in the shape of the USS Starship Enterprise and have blinking lights, Sader said. She said the ornament will be a collector's item.

Sader said pirot dolls also make good Christmas gifts.

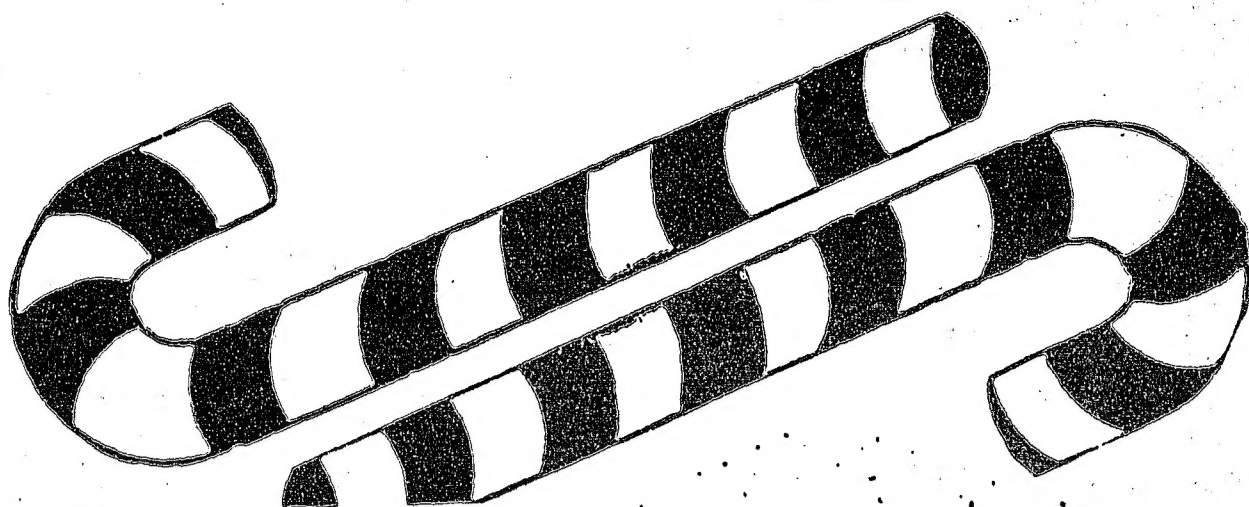
The dolls are really "fancy clowns", according to Denise Neighbors, manager at It's A Small World, a store which also sells the clowns.

The Coach House also carries Pin Head, a square piece with straight pins in which one can make impressions with their hands or face.

Some gifts of the past are making a comeback in popularity, Neighbors said.

These gifts include Troll figurines, short, monster-like creatures with wild hair.

Another gift regaining popularity is the lava lamp, according to Amy Carr, assistant manager at Spencer Gifts.



Carr said more people are buying the lamps because they want to recapture some of the experiences their parents grew up with in the '60s.

Items with a Christmas theme, such as coffee mugs printed with pictures of Santa, are also selling quickly, Sader said.

Another popular gift is the "Smell of Christmas" potpourri which can be purchased at The Afternoon, according to Honor Edson, manager at the store.

"It looks pretty and smells great," she said.

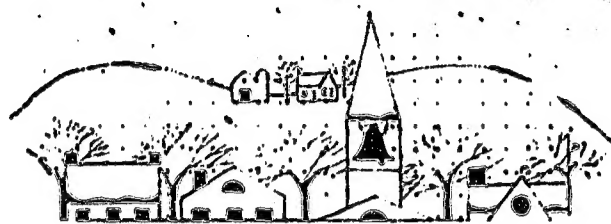
Edson said the store offers shoppers a wide variety of unusual gifts.

Shoppers can find walking sticks which have tree spirits or dragons carved on the tip. The store also carries chess sets with a Lord of the Rings or Sherlock Holmes theme.

Spencers also carries unusual gifts, Carr said.

The store offers anything from neon telephones to slippers shaped as a pig, moose or chicken.

For the sports buff, the hottest item at Lawlor's Sporting



Goods store is roller blades, according to Bob Henn, store manager. Roller blades are a combination ice skate/roller skate, which can be used on sidewalks.

Henn also said that golf balls are a big seller every year.

"It's an easy gift to get a golfer, he said.

He added that team clothing is also selling well this holiday.

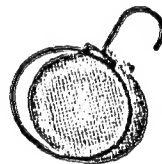
"Nebraska will be hot this Christmas because they're going to the Orange Bowl," he said.

For electronics, answering machines, keyboards and cordless telephones are at the top of shoppers' lists, said Pedro Lagos, manager of Radio Shack.

Personal portable compact disc players are also very popular, said Noel Huff, manager at Stereo West.

Terry Goodman, manager at Musicland, said that Michael Jackson, Garth Brooks, Guns'n Roses and MC Hammer are the top recording artists holiday shoppers are buying.

—Angle Brunkow



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1991 holiday m

'Beauty and the Beast' a true delight

W

ith so much media attention accompanying the general release of Walt Disney Studios' latest full-length feature, it might have been difficult for any film to meet such lofty expectations.

But this was no problem for "Beauty and the Beast," which offers visual and auditory delights, food for thought and good production throughout.

Set in France of another era, the film opens as we learn the sad fable of the Beast, in actuality a prince who was transformed into this frightening form by a witch to whom he refused shelter many years ago. The witch leaves a rose, with the prophecy that if the Beast can love someone who loves him back before the final petal falls, he will return to his original form.

We then meet Belle, who lives with her loving father in a small, provincial village where she feels stifled by isolation and by a lack of interest in the outside world she perceives around her.

Frequenting her favorite establishment, the local bookstore, Belle engages in a futile search for a book she has not already read. As she undertakes her quest for something new, the kindly bookseller gives her one of her favorites.

In a moment, we meet Gaston, the brawny, brainless bundle of narcissism who takes time out from his hunting to declare Belle will be his bride despite the fact she has no interest in him whatsoever.

In addition to all of his overtly spoken conceit, we immediately recognize Gaston's discourtesy toward Belle as he thoughtlessly tosses her new book into the mud.

En route to an inventors' convention, Belle's father becomes lost and winds up at the home of the seemingly monstrous Beast, who imprisons him. The ever-resourceful Belle locates her father and gains his release by promising the Beast she will never leave his castle. And so their relationship begins.

Many elements make "Beauty and the Beast" a magnificent accomplishment. For one, this compelling, engrossing tale can hold the attention of young children and adults alike. For another, as with their stunningly successful "The Little Mermaid," the team of Alan Menken and the late Howard Ashman has created music and lyrics of such enchantment they can stand alone.

With its magnificent music, its imaginative lyrics, its spell-binding images and its important tales to be shared, "Beauty and the Beast" is a film with much to offer.

—Elizabeth Tape



—Amblin Entertainment

Fievel tries to emulate a western hero in his adventure out west.



courtesy Walt Disney Pictures

Teenage beauty Belle discovers that you can't judge a book by its cover when she meets a prince trapped in the body of a beast.

'Fievel Goes West' follows Mousekowitz family adventure

A

n "An American Tail — Fievel Goes West," the sequel to the enormously successful 1986 Steven Spielberg presentation, we once again follow the adventures of the Mousekewitz family.

With promises of cat-less conditions out west, the family embarks on a journey to ease the adversities it faces.

As it turns out, these assurances constitute a hoax concocted by the arch-villain feline Cat-R-Waul (John Cleese), who has devised a complex scheme to benefit from the hard work of the mice and then kill them.

In one of the film's many petrifying sequences, the ever-inquisitive Fievel makes his way under the speeding train and uncovers the plot. When he attempts to return to the safety of his family, he falls from the train and is lost somewhere in the western desert of the United States.

His family arrives at its destination, and attempts to start a home despite the loss of Fievel and obstacles thrown up by the diabolical cats.

After several more alarming experiences in the desert, Fievel encounters his best friend, a cat (Dom DeLuise), who helps him find his family. When no one will listen to Fievel's admonitions about the mice's impending doom, Fievel turns to his hero, Wylie Burp. Burp emerges from his state of torpidity to assist Fievel in saving his family and the rest of the mouse community.

"An American Tail — Fievel Goes West," spins an absorbing tale, creating empathy for the Mousekewitz family forced from home to home by the hatred and sadism of others.

The film effectively establishes concern for Fievel and his family and friends, and causes the audience to worry about how a victorious outcome for them can be formulated.

Phillip Glasser as Fievel once again lends his sweet, appealing voice to this lovable, devoted mouse. Cleese, as the chief of the despicable cats, does a commendable job in helping to create this truly loathsome character. And James Stewart as Burp adds an ingredient of authenticity few other actors could bring to the role.

Though the film fluctuates among social commentary, "An American Tail — Fievel Goes West," offers a strong story, endearing characters and excellent performances.

—Elizabeth Tape



Movie previews

'The Addams Family' wickedly humorous flick

To enjoy Barry Sonnenfeld's new film "The Addams Family" — and there's a lot of enjoyment to be had — my recommendation is to leave all of one's humanitarianism at the door.

With humorous scripting and acting, this film turns the world of acceptable human conduct upside down, attempting humor in subjects that would not, in any other situation, engender laughter.

With that said, I now can go on to say "The Addams Family" is a delightfully, uproariously funny film. Despite their peculiar ways, the Addams family lives by higher ethical standards than those around them.

Starring Raul Julia as Gomez Addams and Anjelica Huston as his wife Morticia ("Tish" to Gomez), the film opens as their crooked lawyer Tully (Dan Hedaya) attempts to steal money from them. The nefarious scheme does not work.

Desperate, the lawyer finds a client who bears a striking resemblance to Gomez' long-lost brother Fester, whom Gomez has been trying desperately to locate.

Enter the imposter Gordon (Christopher Lloyd), as the newly materialized Uncle Fester, who tries in earnest to locate the Addams family's fortune which is hidden somewhere in the dim recesses of the mansion's basement.

To be sure, things do not unfold as planned. While Gomez attempts to apologize for past behavior, the Addams' two children, Wednesday (Christina Ricci) and Pugsley (Jimmy Workman), suspect that this Uncle Fester is an imposter.

The look of "The Addams Family," created under the guidance of director of photography Owen Roizman and production



—Paramount Pictures

Morticia Addams (Anjelica Huston) prunes the roses to savor the thorny stems, while her husband Gomez (Raul Julia) enjoys a game of chess in Paramount Pictures' "The Addams Family".

designer Richard MacDonald, does much to augment the film's moods.

The performances of each member of the Addams Family intensifies the film's atmosphere. From the ghoulishly romantic Gomez, who is constantly professing his love for Tish, to Huston, who plays her role flawlessly, to Ricci, whose deadpan delivery prompts laugh after laugh, they all play well off of one another.

Lloyd as Gordon gives a charming performance despite the challenges the role offers. And Christopher Hart as Thing, the

hand who saves the day, gives an excellent performance as a devoted member of the family, who risks his life (in a great scene) to save Tish, and whose presence generates one bad — but nonetheless funny — play-on-words after another.

For those who don't mind tossing traditional good taste to the winds, "The Addams Family" provides a delightful movie experience.

—Elizabeth Tape

'For the Boys' showcases Bette Midler's talents

It's hard not to be

bowed over by the extraordinary performance of Bette Midler in her new film "For the Boys," which gives her the chance to display both her acting and musical talents.

Told in flashback, we meet Dixie Leonard (Midler) when television production assistant Jeff Brooks (Arye Gross) is assigned to go to her home to talk her into attending an imminent event at which she is to be a guest of honor.

Brooks finds Dixie in her darkened apartment, threatening she will not attend. Before he gets kicked out, he buys himself a little time with the promise of repairing her broken phonograph. The film then moves back about 50 years — to wartime — when Dixie and two colleagues were recording songs in a production studio.

It is there she receives a letter asking her to accompany the acclaimed comedian Eddie Sparks (James Caan) on his European tour to entertain American troops.

She accepts, and is a magnificent success. This success is much to the initial consternation of Sparks, who seems uneasy about the wildly enthusiastic reception she achieves at her first performance.

But all is smoothed over, and she and Eddie begin a partnership which will span

more than one generation and more than one war.

"For the Boys" represents a striking achievement for many reasons. For one, the production itself clearly displays the most meticulous labors to achieve a sense of realism. An example is the vast number of service people in the audiences where Dixie and Eddie perform.

The film also contains beautifully performed and orchestrated songs, and unfolds a story which holds the audience's attention from beginning to end.

Enough cannot be said in praise of Midler's astounding performance in this film. Caan also deserves credit for a job well done. Both in his spoken and sung lines, Caan portrays Eddie Sparks effectively.

Mark Rydell, who directed Midler in her Oscar-nominated performance in "The Rose," once again demonstrates his abilities to draw from her a superlative performance, as well as superb performances from all those around her.

With the vast scope it ably covers, "For the Boys" clearly demonstrates the labors of the many skilled people who worked to bring this film to fruition.

—Elizabeth Tape

'My Girl' offers tender moments

I

n Pennsylvania, the summer of 1972, we meet Vada Sultenfuss, a young girl surrounded by unusual circumstances in Howard Zieff's new film "My Girl."

Vada (Anna Chlumsky) is obsessed with guilt about her mother's death, which she is convinced she caused. She is also haunted by anxieties about illness and consumed with love for her teacher Mr. Bixler (Griffin Dunne).

Vada lives with her mortician father (Dan Aykroyd) and her grandmother (Ann Nelson) in the funeral home. Vada's grandmother, who came to help after her mother's death, is now reduced to sitting in a rocking chair and staring into space with occasional inappropriate outbursts.

Into this comes Shelley (Jamie Lee Curtis), a cosmetologist who has answered an advertisement for a funeral home position.

Vada finds herself with ambivalent feelings toward Shelley, whom she clearly likes, but whom she also comes to resent as Shelley's relationship with Vada's father continues to grow.

Often eschewing the company of her peers, and occasionally becoming the victim of their ridicule, Vada finds solace in the company of her closest friend, Thomas J. (Macaulay Culkin).

"My Girl" offers more than a few tender moments. Its depiction of the friendship between Vada and Thomas J. is commendable in its simplicity and compassion. The film communicates a sense of these characters' struggles to comprehend the world around them and the comfort each brings to the other.

In a creative writing course, Vada is exposed to group meditation. Some time later, she climbs into her grandmother's bed, takes her hands and sits as instructed in her class for the meditation ritual. As Vada sits there, the scene shows her hurt as she awaits a response from this woman she loves so much.

It is in the film's moments of intense emotion, which are numerous, that "My Girl" demonstrates its artistry as a film capable of evoking intensely emotional responses.

—Elizabeth Tape

Christmas ads a must

Imagine for a moment walking through a department store, watching wistfully as the Valentine's Day displays are taken down to be replaced by ... Christmas decorations?

Imagine for a moment watching the summer reruns, when all of a sudden, a commercial comes on advertising a perfectly ordinary product set against a festive ... Christmas background?

Granted, these are slight exaggerations, but have you ever noticed that the rush for Christmas advertising begins even before the swimsuits are dry?

Is this year any exception?

According to various advertising experts, the question is impossible to answer without taking a look at the factors that are essential to a marketing strategy.

Of those interviewed, virtually all agreed on one thing: Retailers' advertising dollars are dependent on the condition of the economy.

"Back in the early '80s, there was a mild recession. Therefore, the retail dollars were coming in late and holiday advertising didn't start until about two weeks after Thanksgiving," said Peter Grignon, account executive at WOWT.

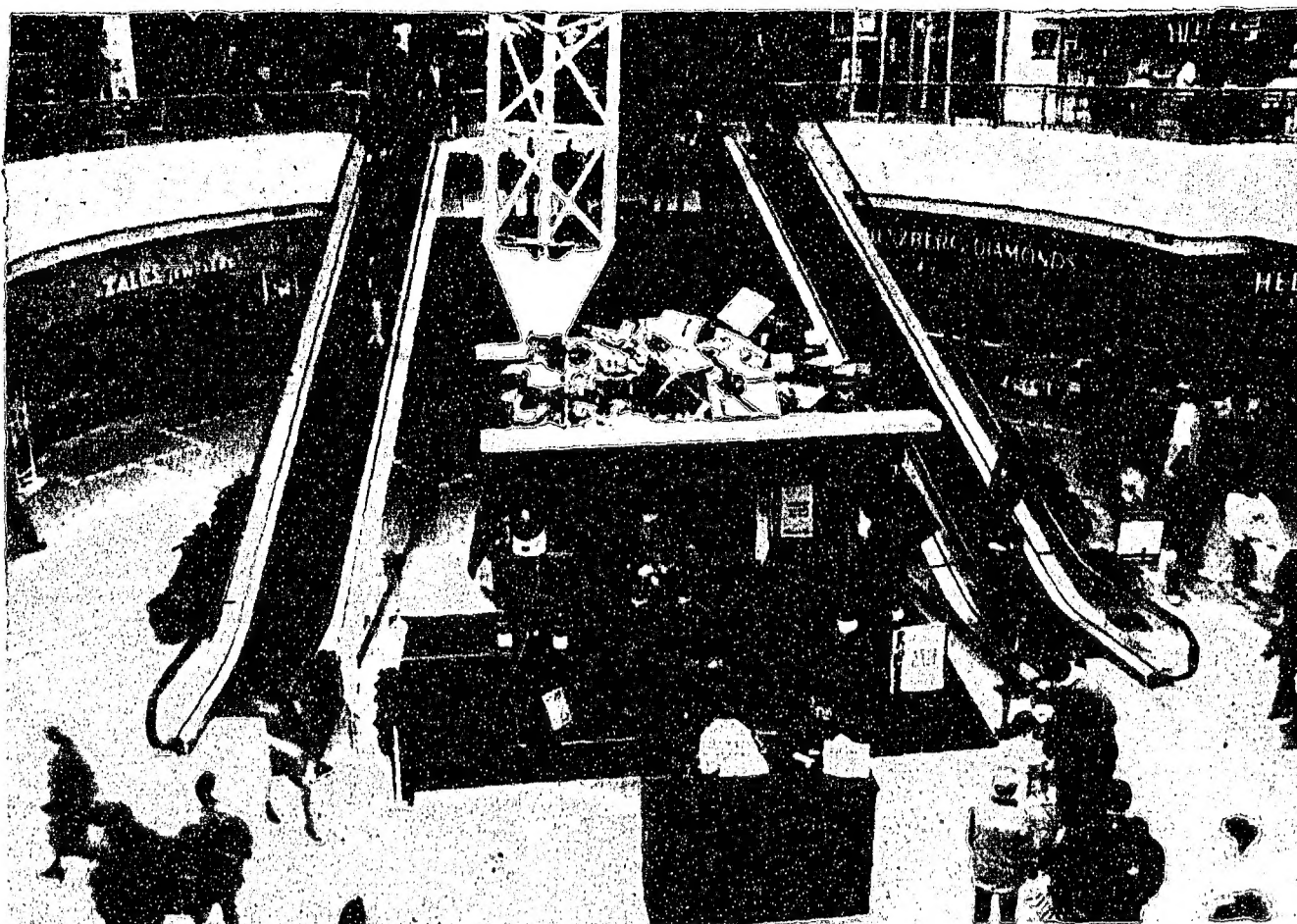
"In the mid-'80s, the big corporate dollars were starting advertising around Nov. 1 and hitting heavy," Grignon continued. "Since 1989, it's been getting later and later."

Once businesses buy their merchandise, they have the option to spread their advertising strategy out over a period of months or wait and saturate the airwaves and newspapers closer to Christmastime. With this in mind, the recession was cited most often as the triggering factor of holiday advertising.

"The recession is very real; businesses knew sales were down even before the holiday season," said Louis Pol, chairman of UNO's marketing program.

"Some retailers argue that their sales aren't down from last year (because of frequent bargain sales throughout the year). But when you pin them down and ask them about their profit and revenue, they are silent."

"One thing is clear: A number of retailers feel the holiday sales are in danger," Pol concluded.



—Ed Carlson

Santa Claus sits amid the bustle of Christmas shopping at Crossroads Mall.

Laurie Venner, associate media director of the Bozell Inc. advertising agency, believed that the retailers did send out their ads a little early this year, and cited four possible explanations.

"First, the recessionary period. Many businesses are expecting sales to be down a little anyway."

"Second, it could be a ploy on the part of the T.V. and radio stations. They may not be selling the ad time as quickly as they would like, so they go to the retailers and offer air time at bargain prices. Not many people think of that, but it is a possibility."

"Third, retailers recognize that in the ad world the amount of 'clutter' increases every year and by getting their ads out faster, they have a better chance."

"Fourth, in Omaha, I think the weather boosted holiday spirit (early snows). It made people think of Christmas earlier," Venner said.

Susan Beebe, account executive at KETV television station, also thought Christmas advertising began early, "due in part to the late Thanksgiving date and merchants competing with last year's sales."

When asked if she believed that early advertisements had a profound effect on consumers' spending behavior, she hesitated.

"I think consumer shopping has been more impacted by the weather than anything else. There are a lot of tempting offers from the merchants, but it all boils down to what the weather is like on Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

Because of the closeness of the holidays, retailers' advertising staffs were unavailable for comment ... no doubt already planning the line of attack for next year.

—Julia Ybarra

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International students find similarities, differences in Christmas celebrations

A Santa Claus who speaks Greek, lived in Turkey and arrives in Beirut via helicopter.

This is the composite picture of St. Nicholas derived from talking to students in the International Student Services office.

Although Santa may sound a little weird, Christmas seems to touch every part of the world.

Most students interviewed said Christmas in their home countries is similar to Christmas in the United States.

"It's pretty much like here," said Kaoru Ozawa of Tokyo. "The only real difference is we don't go to church. It's not as much of a religious thing."

Kaoru also said that chicken is usually the main course for a Japanese Christmas dinner. Parties are common, and, as in the United States, so is gift-giving.

Ozawa also mentioned that several international students plan on getting together this year for a Christmas party of their own.

"With things like holidays, it's a little hard to fit in (with host families). You get a little lonely," she said.

In Jordan, according to Bothaina Abdul-Fattah, Christmas is not celebrated by members of her faith (Muslim), although there are Christians in Jordan that do celebrate.

"You could probably get the day off from work, if you are Christian, but it is not like a thing where everyone celebrates," she said.

A student from Beirut, Lebanon, (who asked to remain anonymous), said Christmas in her country is usually a "big deal if there are children in the house." The adults do not do any gift-giving until New Year's Eve.

The children constitute the only reason for gift-giving and "special" things, such as the arrival of Santa Claus from helicopters at the local schools. He passes out presents to all the schoolchildren upon his landing.

Pelei Belleh, of Delta (formerly Lagos), Nigeria, gives an account of a Christmas in her country:

"Some go to church; they have a large dinner, like Thanksgiving is here. We never went to church in my family, but there's dancing, dancing, dancing, and you drink and eat. There's also always fireworks."

Tatiana Gonzalez, from western Panama, says her country celebrates Christmas with a Christmas tree, a nativity scene and fireworks.

Almost the whole community is Christian, especially Catholic, so the nativity scene is much more important than the tree.

"If you get the nativity scene and then have extra



Rohit Gupta, director of International Student Services.

"Our primary concentration is not the exchange of gifts; it's the religion."

—Rohit Gupta, Bombay India

money, then you go get the tree. Every house has at least the nativity scene," she said.

A Christmas Eve in Panama means dinner on that night, not on Christmas day, according to Tatiana. Then people visit neighbors, sharing the food they made.

"Sooner or later, everyone ends up going back and forth. At midnight, presents are opened. Also at midnight, church bells ring all over, and the fireworks start. So everyone knows to say 'Merry Christmas' to all your friends and family. You call everyone, because everyone is awake. Then, you go party. You go dancing."

Tatiana mentioned an interesting New Year's Eve tradition of Panama.

"There's a contest between different neighborhoods. They make a pinata of someone everyone hates, such as Fidel Castro or a former Russian president (not Gorbachev), and it's always someone who is still living, although now it has become more common to make it of someone that is well-liked, too. Then they all burn that pinata. There are fireworks in it — so they all get the feeling that, with the bad guys, they're burning away all the bad that can come from that coming year."

A Christmas season from a Christian point of view in Jordan consists of a tree, buying clothes for the family, and going to church at midnight on Dec. 24.

"In the morning, you go to houses of relatives to tell them Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and maybe eat and drink some qahwa sada (in English, "traditional coffee", says Rami (Rob) Sawaged.

"Also, for Christmas, we plant wheat, called lentils, to cover up Jesus' manger in the nativity scene. When the plant is full grown, it resembles alfalfa."

Ibrahim Mahmoud plans to spend Christmas with a local family.

"This is the first year I'm going to feel what Christmas is," he said. Although this is his fourth year at UNO, he said he usually travels to his native U.A.E. (United Arab Emirates).

Of the Islam faith, Mahmoud said he is familiar with Christian traditions surrounding Christmas.

"There are a lot of foreign workers in my country and they celebrate, so I know about Christmas," he said. "As Muslims, we respect other religions. Christmas is a holy thing, so I respect it. I have a sense of holiness for Christmas even though I'm not Christian."

Mahmoud said the two major holidays in his country fall in March and May next year. Because the Arabic month is shorter than the English month, the date of the holiday changes each year.

Mahmoud said the holidays are a religious time, when people ask Allah to forgive their sins.

Families have big lunches and dinners, much like people in the United States do at Christmas time.

"Everybody wears new stuff that day," Mahmoud said.

"The young people get money from the elderly," he said. "The rich people give the poor people money on that day, so everybody is happy."

Rohit Gupta, director of the International Student Services, also said Christmas in the United States was no surprise to him. He is from Bombay, India, which also has a large number of Christian residents.

"I'm from a catholic school so we celebrate Christmas every year since I was in kindergarten," he said. "We used to have a Santa Claus who came to school and brought us gifts. That's how I have the feeling of Christmas, because I went to a Christian school."

See International, page 11.

LAUGH AND GRAM

COMEDY

Monday, Dec. 9
11:00am - 1pm

Free lunch comedy featuring
Ron "Oz" Osborne with special guest
Jent Monk

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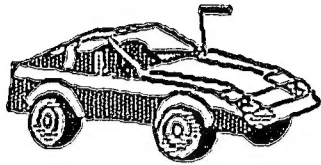
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CAMPUS RECREATION



Tie one on . . .
To remind others not to.

Tie the red ribbon on your car as a reminder:

Don't Drink and Drive.

Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Ribbons will be distributed on campus during the week of December 9-13.

Prizes donated by local merchants will be given to owners of randomly selected vehicles that display the red ribbon.

Featured Speaker: Kay Neil, MADD
Wednesday, December 11, 1991
MBSC Ballroom, 12:00 Noon

Fact: Drunk Driving killed 102 Nebraskans in 1990.

Fact: In the USA, drunk drivers cost society \$57 billion each year in rehabilitation, lost earnings, court costs, and other expenses.

This campaign is co-sponsored by: Mavericks' Choice (an alcohol education program funded by the NCAA Foundation), Campus Recreation, UNO Health Services - Alcohol and Drug Education Program, Student Programming Organization, Chi Omega Sorority, MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)



HPER BUILDING Holiday Hours

The HPER Building will close on Friday, December 20th, at 8:00 pm.

The HPER Building will re-open on Thursday, January 2, at 6:30 am.

HPER Building Hours
from January 2 to January 12
Monday - Friday 6:30 am-8:00 pm
Saturday 8:30 am-4:00 pm
Sunday 12:00 noon-8:00 pm

On Sunday, December 8th, Activity Court II East, (114-E) in the HPER Building will be unavailable for use for Informal Recreation because of a UNO Fencing Club Tournament.

UNO Bowling Club

Nebraska Conference - Second Meet

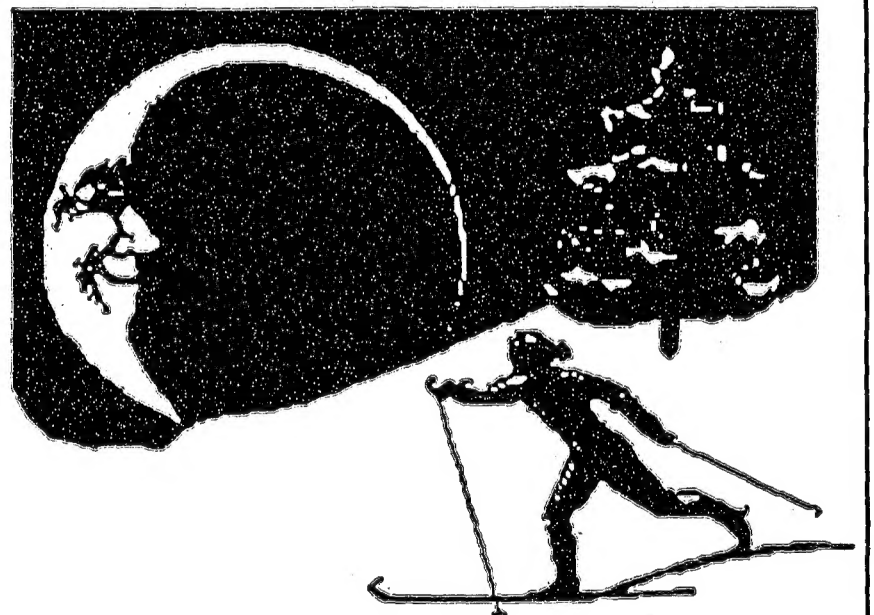
Kings Lanes - Norfolk

After the second of four meets, the Nebraska at Kearney men's team leads the handicap division with UNO women's and men's teams in 4th and 5th place respectively. The men's scratch division is led by Nebraska-Lincoln followed closely by Nebraska at Kearney and UNO.

Kevin Albertson of UNO holds the high scratch game of 257 for the men and Marty Rasmussen has the high scratch series with a 654. He also has the high handicap series with a 673. Kim Klope of UNO holds the high women's handicap series with a 725 while Amy Grady has the high scratch series of 586. The UNO men's team has the high team scratch series of 2913.

The next meet is the last weekend of January in Lincoln. Averages from Kings Lanes in Norfolk for the UNO club members:

Men		Women	
Wyatt Gardner	169	Malia Hall	128
Greg Preston	182	Kim Klope	160
Tom Mock	187	Candy Karmann	171
Greg Dugger	191	Angie Eikenberry	182
Kevin Albertson	202	Amy Grady	191
Marty Rasmussen	207		



Cross Country Ski Trip to Wisconsin, January 7-12, 1992

We're going to Winter Park, Wisconsin, for some of the finest cross-country skiing within a thousand miles. We'd like you to come with us and experience the beauty and fun of Wisconsin in winter. Even though we will be staying in a resort lodge, we have managed to put together what has been called, "the least expensive ski trip in Omaha." Cost includes equipment rental, ski lessons, and lodging.

Registration Cost: \$75 UNO/ \$115 GP

Estimated Transportation Cost: \$85

Pretrip Meeting: Wednesday, Dec. 11, 7:00 pm



Drive safely, everyone

R

inging in the New Year can be dangerous for those who like to commemorate the holiday with parties and drinking. Especially when it's time to drive home.

Planning ahead to arrange transportation might be the best route.

Limousine rentals, taxis, buses, or designated drivers can help celebrants get home safely.

Limousine rentals are popular on New Year's Eve, according to Cheryl Holmes, manager of Old Market Limousines.

"It's a busy time of year. We usually book up," she said. "Think about it — we're the perfect designated driver."

Prices for limos vary, depending on how many people need to be accommodated, Holmes said. The smallest limo, the stretch, rents for \$35 an hour. The next size, the super stretch, rents for \$45 per hour, and the wide body super stretch rents for \$55 per hour, Holmes said.

Reservations are still being accepted for New Year's Eve, she said.

Cab service for the holidays is "not really any different from any other holiday," said Fred Lochr, manager of Safeway Cabs.

Thanksgiving and Christmas are even a little slower, said Lochr, who usually sends out smaller crews on these days.

New Year's Eve is a different story. "On New Year's Eve, we put the whole crew out," said Lochr. He said it usually is not a

problem for the drivers. "They all want to work because it's good money."

On New Year's Eve, it may take 45 minutes to an hour for a cab to pick up a caller, Lochr said.

Lochr said he usually has about 30 cars on the street. "On any given night, each car usually makes about 20 runs. New Year's Eve is a little heavier; maybe 25 to 30 runs," he said.

Some bars will call a cab for inebriated customers, according to Sean Mick, assistant manager of Paddy Murphy's Bar in Omaha.

"If people are too drunk and we see them leaving, we get one of the bartenders who haven't been drinking to drive them home, or one of our friends. If worse comes to worse, we will pay for a taxi," he said.

Mick said this caution is not only out of concern for his customers' safety, but for the bar's liability.

"The odds are pretty slim that anything will happen," he said. "And even if something did, they're pretty slim that someone would sue us or anything."

"The more reputable ones (bars) and the ones that are well-run will try to keep an eye out and do the right thing," Mick said.

Lochr said the last couple of years Creighton University has set up a special fund for its students.

If a student became drunk and could not drive, he or she could receive cab service while charging it to their school.

— Sue Furnas

From *International*, page 9

Gupta, who belongs to the Hindu religion, said in his country a similar holiday would be Diwali, a religious occasion in late November.

"It's basically the feeling of festival that goes anywhere from 15 days to a month," he said. "On the day of Diwali is when they all get together on a common ground. We would generally ask God to forgive our sins and give us a new start."

Hindus also exchange gifts, but Gupta said it is different than in the United States.

"I really felt the gifts part is expected (here) — if the person does not get a gift, they would really be disappointed," he said. "Our primary concentration is not the exchange of gifts; it's the religion."

Kaan Certel, from Istanbul, Turkey, said although his country is almost 99 percent Muslim, Christmas is celebrated.

"We have the Santa Claus and the gifts," he said. "There is no religious meaning of Christmas, but I guess they just celebrate the New Year."

"By the way, Santa Claus lives in part of Turkey. He died there and is buried there," Certel said. He shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know if it's true or not, but that's the

story."

Whether or not Santa resided there or not may be debatable, but Certel said the largest Greek Orthodox church in the world is located in Turkey.

"Christmas is important to them, of course. They have a big celebration then."

Eugenis Ioannidis, from Greece, said Christmas in his country is similar to the ones he has seen here.

"Big family dinners. We buy presents. Just like here," he said. And there's a Santa Claus, too, in a red suit and with a big white beard.

"The only difference is he talks Greek," Ioannidis said.

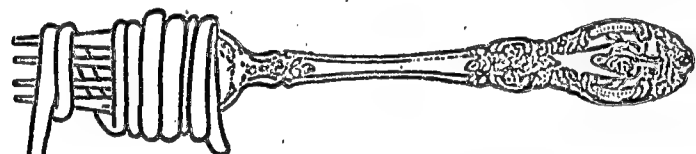
"Lots of people go to church (in Greece)," he said. "I get this feeling like people (here) really look forward only to the presents."

One difference he has noted is that after midnight on Christmas Eve, people in Greece go out and celebrate.

"It's kind of boring here," he said.

Another important difference is the temperature — usually about 50 degrees Fahrenheit at Christmas time in Greece.

— Kathy Albin and Lori Safranek



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Applications are available at the Gateway, Annex 26 or call 554-2470 for more information.

Deadline Dec. 18th

Editorial staff positions are paid.



Ak-Sar-Ben brightens holiday with light display

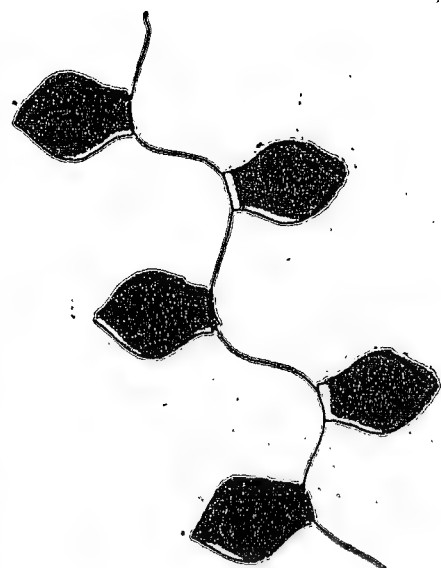
This holiday season, the Ak-Sar-Ben infield will once again be lit up with over 50,000 brilliant lights.

The "Holiday In Lights" display, which is a benefit for the Goodfellows Program, features a 1/2 mile drive through hundreds of trees decked out in dazzling lights.

The exhibit also has over 70 animated characters and holiday figures, some up to 24 feet tall.

The Goodfellows Program works in conjunction with 30 Omaha-area social service agencies to provide needy families with food certificates during the holiday season, said Deb Klanderud, Goodfellows Program Coordinator.

"Working with the program really opens your eyes to what is going on in our community," she said. "It is really easy to become comfortable with our lives, and sometimes we forget to see what is out there."



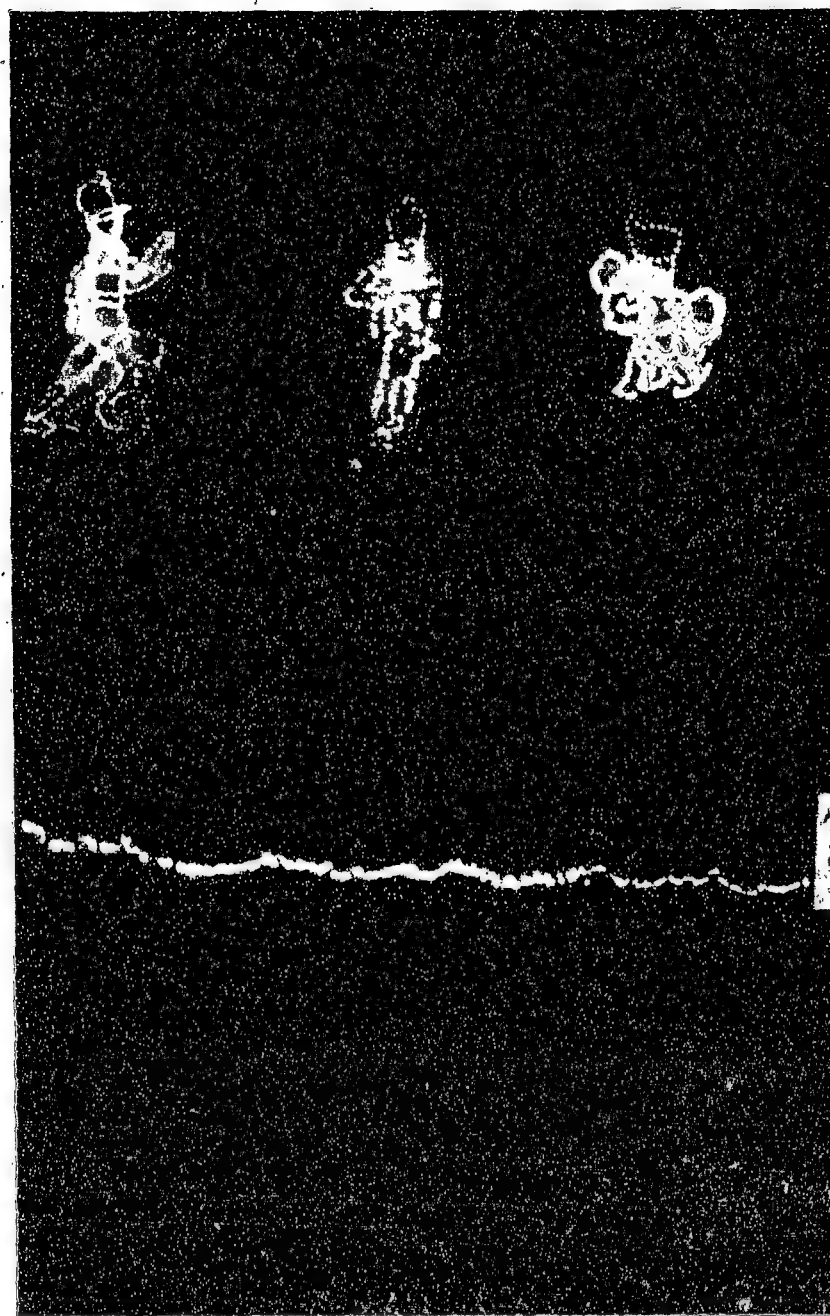
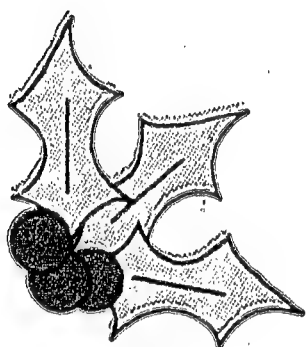
This is the first year "Holiday In Lights" will benefit the Goodfellows Program, and hopes are high that it will be a success.

"It gives you a really good feeling to know that you are helping less fortunate people," Klanderud said.

"Holiday In Lights" will be open through Dec. 31, and is located at the Ak-Sar-Ben infield at 63rd and Shirley streets.

Admission is \$5 per car and \$25 per bus. The display is open Sunday through Thursday from 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 6 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

— Krista Curtis



—Ed Carlson

Lights, lights, and more lights are featured at Ak-Sar-Ben.

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Wish You and Yours a Very

Merry Holiday Season and

Best Wishes for the New Year

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FOOD SERVICES

1991 Special Holiday Issue

section II



Mannheim Steamroller closes tour in Omaha

Mannheim Steamroller will end its 1991 Christmas Steamroller Tour with seven shows at Omaha's Orpheum Theatre running Dec. 26-31.

The 2 1/2 hour concert has become a hallmark of the Christmas holidays, performing nationally since 1985 in such cities as Salt Lake City, Denver, Minneapolis and Milwaukee.

Both Christmas albums have recently been certified double platinum with worldwide sales topping 6 million; making them the two largest selling Christmas albums in 30 years. Also included in the agenda is music from the "Fresh Aire" album series.

Featured performers are Chip Davis on percussion, woodwinds and other instruments; Jackson Berkey on keyboards; Almeda Berkey on supporting keyboards and Ron Cooley on guitar.

The show is not only geared toward audio enjoyment, but visual as well. In a press release by American Gramophone, the recording label of Mannheim Steamroller, the concert is described as "a three-screen, multimedia show. Special effects include slides,

film, computer effects and special lighting. New this year are moving lights (Intellabeams) that create motion and patterns and reach into the audience."

Mannheim Steamroller and American Gramophone Records were created by Chip Davis, a prolific composer whose distinctive style of music has earned him a Grammy nomination for his version of "Silent Night" and Country Music Writer of the Year (1976) for his nine hits with the C.W. McCall Band.

"Almost everything I do is related to music," Davis said in a news release.

"My life is pretty much intertwined into business, music and nature."

Davis majored in music at the University of Michigan, then graduated to sing with the

Norman Luboff Choir. Davis felt he needed more of a musical challenge so he left to teach music in the Ohio public school system. In an

effort to introduce students to classical music form, he adapted standards to contemporary rhythms. Eventually, he recorded these experiments and in 1975 founded American Gramophone Records with "Fresh Aire I" as its initial release. The rest, as they say, is history.

Although the Mannheim Steamroller and Fresh Aire style is distinctive, it's hard to define. It has been referred to as "18th Century rock and roll" or "Baroque pop," but Davis pre-

fers a different term.

"I'd rather call my music eclectic, because that's basically what it is. It draws from a lot of different sources to come up with some-

thing totally different. I draw from the Renaissance, from rock and roll, even from the Georgian chant coupled with synthesizers.

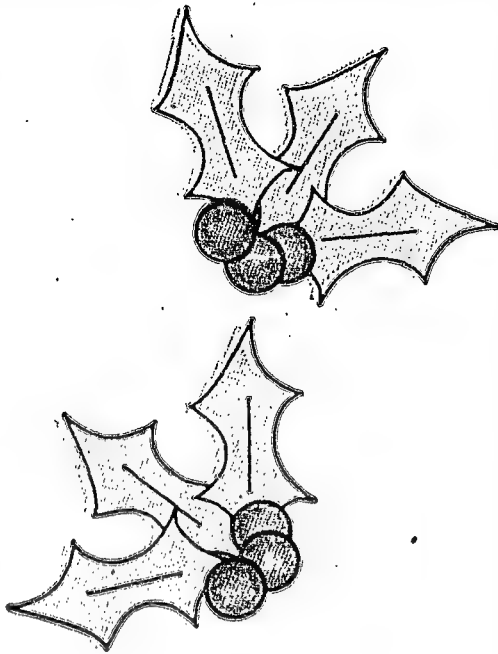
"But it is not freeform," Davis continued. "In a lot of the New Age stuff, someone will just kind of go from one thing to another, but I follow pretty rigid, formal structures. I'm still writing in classical forms."

Not one to remain idle, Davis is currently involved in a new four-piece musical series titled "Day Parts," music to fit certain moods of the day. The first in this series was released in September, "Sunday Morning Coffee," on both compact disc and cassette tape.

For the holidays, American Gramophone is also offering "Sunday Morning Coffee" as part of a gift package containing two coffee mugs and eight 2 oz. packs of a special European-type blend, "GramaCoffee". This will be sold at the concert individually and as the gift package along with other Mannheim Steamroller music, sweatshirts, hats, Christmas ornaments, pins and videos.

All shows begin at 8 p.m., except for Dec. 29, when the first show is at 2 p.m. and the second at 7 p.m. Cost of tickets are \$16.50 and \$19.50. For more information contact the Civic Auditorium ticket agency.

—Julia Ybarra



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'A Christmas Carol' thrills even Scrooges

Getting into the holiday spirit is easy if seeing the Omaha Community Playhouse's adaptation of "A Christmas Carol" is on your holiday to-do list.

If Dick Boyd as a cankerous Scrooge and the rest of the cast don't

make your bells jingle, you might as well spend the entire holiday season holed up somewhere — alone — intoning "bah humbug" to yourself.

Scrooge, the Cratchits, Jacob Marley and the three omniscient ghosts currently are in their 16th annual visit to the Playhouse, located at 6915 Cass St. With aggregate attendance of the play topping 178,000 last season, this season's production looks to beat last as successful.

Charles Dickens' well-known classic holiday tale, as performed by the Playhouse troupe, is a real family affair for three reasons. First, it is good entertainment for the entire family. Secondly, the main crux of the play is about the Cratchit family's trials and Scrooge's eventual realization of the importance of family and friends. And thirdly, the performance is given

in part by real-life families, working together both on stage and backstage.

Individuals who excelled in their roles include Boyd as Scrooge, Daniel Lewis as Tiny Tim, Sue Perkins as the Ghost of Christmas Past and Al DiMauro as Jacob Marley. Other characters deserving of mention include Scrooge's post-mortem purse snatchers for their laugh-inducing portrayals of cackling greed monsters, and Bob Snipp as the Ghost of Christmas Present.

An interesting note about the songs is they were of the religious variety, as opposed to the standard carols. The religious aspect of the season also was brought into play with the Christmas past manger scene. The costumes also deserve mention, as they were effective at being era-specific and appealing to the eye.



Although the acting was high caliber, the set deserves the highest accolades. People of all ages will be in awe of the life-like street scenes, the enormous and frightening Ghost of Christmas Future with its moving hand, and the magical, smoke-screened appearance of Marley out of nowhere. Also deserving mention are the starry scenes with the Ghost of Christmas Past and the hilarious



—Omaha Community Playhouse

No more 'humbugs' from this Scrooge. Members of the cast of "A Christmas Carol," from left: (Front) Dick Boyd, Tom Neumann, Dawn Buller-Kirke, (Back) Bob Snipp.

scenes of Scrooge flying with the Ghost of Christmas Present.

Even down to the very minute details of the authentic-appearing store fronts, the careful planning of the set crew is obvious to the most untrained observer.

Overall, "A Christmas Carol" is a production which should not be missed by someone

even as miserly as old Scrooge. Tickets are \$20 for adults, and \$10 for students and children. The play will run through Dec. 22, with performances Tuesday through Saturday at 8 p.m., and Sunday at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. For more information, call the Playhouse at 553-4890.

—Deanne Nelson

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Take a walk down

Holiday is time for being with family

Christmas for me is something I look forward to with great anticipation every year. It is not the presents that make this holiday so special for me; it is the closeness I feel with my family that makes every year a memorable one.

Like most teenagers, when I was that age, spending time with the family was (I was certain) a form of cruel punishment rather than something to be cherished.

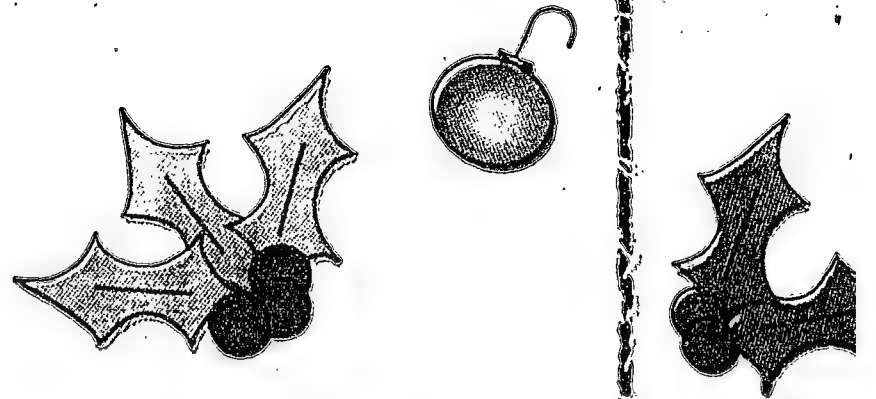
The last few years, I have come to regard my family members as friends rather than people I am forced to spend time with out of some sense of loyalty. For the first time in my adult life I appreciate them, their individuality and their love.

Most memorable of Christmases, though, would have to be last year. My sister, Katrina, got married in May to a wonderful man I was happy to have as part of my family and they moved

to Chicago. For the first time in my life, my sister was away from home and much to my surprise — I missed her. My life was finally falling into order and I had gotten involved with a kind, caring person. My parents were enjoying not having any children at home and were getting to know one another again after raising my sister and I.

Unlike the Christmases of the past when there were just the four of us, last Christmas morning was spent with the new extended family of six: Mom, Dad, Katrina, Chris, Jamie and me. That is what the most memorable holiday is for me — because all of my family was together.

—Heidi Jeanne Hess
Gateway Editor-In-Chief



Ornament makes holiday special

I was homeless two years ago on Christmas Day. My true love and I had a residence in Minneapolis, Minn., where we had just migrated from but we found ourselves in Pittsburgh, Penn., without an address.

His employer put us up at the Hampton Inn by the airport. OK, so we had a roof over our heads and a bed to sleep in, but that was about it.

Pittsburgh is not the Garden of Eden; Omaha is and, therefore, not well known for its gourmet cuisine. Finding a decent meal was more than difficult.

But Christmas Eve, there we were, in a hotel room, practically the only guests, watching T.V. with a half-gallon of German chocolate ice cream from Baskin-Robbins as our meal.

I had to drive down to the local drug store and while he wrapped my present.

I came back within 30 minutes with Christmas lights we hung around the large ugly picture above the bed.

We exchanged our gifts. I bought a wooden ornament — a building with an old-fashioned sign hanging from it, which said "Hotel".

I wrote 1989 on it. We'll put it on our tree every year, to remind us of our favorite Christmas.

—Tara Muir
Gateway Columnist

Santa, stop by soon

My fondest memories of Christmas time have always been centered around the Christmas tree. I don't mean the tree itself, but the presents, of course. For our family, Christmas wasn't the time of year for the gathering of family and friends, but the time to give your relatives all the objects you believe they've needed the past year.

Not only does this provide a means for your parents to give you those "Merry-Christmas-move-out-soon" gifts, but it replenishes your diminishing supply of wool sweaters that don't go with any of the rest of your clothes.

Most treasured of all, however, were the gifts from Santa. My brother and I learned at an early age it wasn't because we had been bad that we received such esoteric presents from Santa, but the fact that St. Nick had a strange sense of humor. At least in our house.

Every year we would rouse our tireless bodies at some inhuman hour to see what unwrapped presents awaited us under the tree. We respected them because they were all we could play with until our parents rose three hours hence, and because mostly what we would get later would be clothes anyway.

Nevertheless, the year we received Chinese puzzles from Santa was a shocker. Six in the morning is far too early to try to reassemble 20 crooked pieces of wood into the shape of a cube. Neither my brother nor I were any good at Chinese checkers either. It was almost as if Kris Kringle had spent his time browsing for cheap stuff at Pier One. Himm ...

A few years after, Santa topped his previous mind-bogglers by succumbing to war nostalgia, and left some Army surplus under our tree. I would like to say I was enough of a red-neck to get a .44 with red and green ribbon, but that would be a lie. However, I still treasure the folding pack shovel, and keep it in my vehicle in case I need to dig any holes in a hurry.

Perhaps living so close to the magnetic North Pole has unbalanced the man, or perhaps he doesn't like the chips and pop we leave for him. Regardless, our lives have been brightened in their own, unique way by his antics, and whoever he may be, he is always welcome in our house.

Just try not to step on the cat next time.

—Dan Crawford
Gateway Production Editor



'What's Christmas really all about?'

Charlie Brown, in anguish and confusion, asks Linus that question every year. And every year, Linus reassures him with the story of the manger.

Charlie Brown's confusion is understandable. Every year, it seems the world gets a little nastier, a little more selfish, and a little less giving.

Maybe Christmas is more important than ever.

I've always had a soft spot in my heart for this time of year. My heart always melts a bit when the wreaths and lights start coming out and the malls begin their Christmas sales.

When I was a kid, of course, I had the same feelings about Christmas most suburban, white kids have — naked greed. I loved getting a haul of gifts and spending the whole day playing with my new toys.

Of course, since I have (allegedly) grown up, the time of drooling over gifts under the tree is gone. But it's replaced by something much nicer.

Now, I can't wait for other people to open the gifts I have given them. And I think I understand why.

It's so hard to show affection for people these days. The time pressures of school make it hard throughout the year to spend as much time with the people we care about. It's so easy to get caught up in everyday life and neglect a friendship. And it's so easy to let that neglect become a barrier between us and those we care about.

In a sense, Christmas gives us an excuse to show we care about someone. A gift and an exchange of heartfelt "season's greetings" can be a chance to renew and a chance to reaffirm. Eggnog can be the balm of the human soul.

Sure, to a lot of people, Christmas has become a task. They feel they "have to" go get gifts for every relative they have, bake enough cookies to feed the crew of the U.S.S. West Virginia, and

put up enough lights on their house to distract airplanes.

In doing so, they run themselves ragged and end up hating Christmas as being too much work.

But that's not the point. Sure, some of that stuff is nice, but there is no law requiring Christmas to be a hassle. But then you start looking upon it as an obligation, is the minute you lose sight of what Christmas is.

Linus said Christmas is too commercial these days, and all the lights and Christmas sales have taken the meaning of Christmas. Will all due respect to Charles Schultz' bawling theologian, I must respectfully dissent.

If the whistles and bells the malls put up was the extent of human emotion at Christmas, it would be a sickening display. But it's not, at least to me.

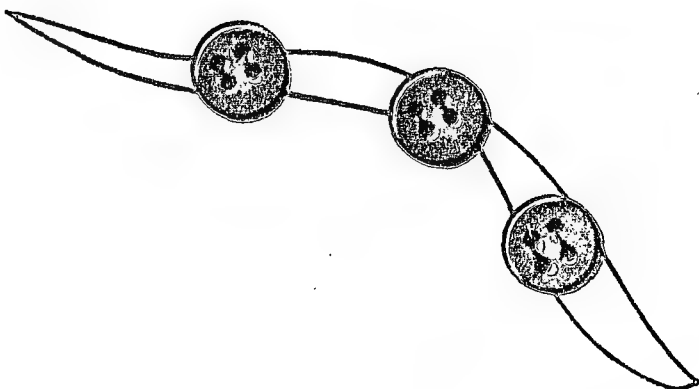
Christmas, to me, is a celebration of friendship, love, compassion, understanding, and peace. A time where we huddle around a roaring fire, watch a gentle snowfall cover the earth in a white blanket, and make our loved ones happy with the gifts we have given them.

But it doesn't happen all by itself. There is no Christmas that makes all men angels for one night a year. The hunger, suffering and loneliness in the world doesn't go away on Dec. 24.

So don't waste the season. January will be here soon enough, and the world will return to its dull, punishing, senseless grind. Make the holidays special, a respite from the world for a few days. Take the time to remember your friends, your lover and your family. Use Christmas as the excuse to tell them how much they mean to you.

Peace.

—Patrick R. Lange
Gateway Columnist



DECEMBER 6, 1991



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA GATEWAY

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own memory lane

Christmas Eve anticipation doesn't fade

I love Christmas, as most people do, even though I let it make me a little crazy at times. Like last year, when my sister and I were still making presents for our parents on Dec. 23.

My special Christmas memory is really a combination of all my Christmases—from my childhood to married life.

I remember lying in bed, alternately squeezing my eyes shut and opening them wide, waiting for Santa to come. I couldn't decide if he'd get there faster if I fell asleep or if I would try to sneak a peek at him this year.

Suddenly, I heard it. Jingle bells. I flew out of the bed and into the living room.

"Dad, Dad, I just heard bells," I shouted. "I bet Santa's on the roof."

Dad was more startled than I was. I'm sure he couldn't figure out what to say to me. Finally, he said, "Well, miss, you better get back in bed or he won't come in."

I screamed and ran back to bed.

Twenty-some years later, I know I won't be able to sleep this Christmas Eve, either. I still stay all night at my parents' house. My husband and I take all our presents over and we all open gifts in the morning. A couple years, we tried

exchanging on Christmas Eve, but I was too disappointed when I didn't find anything new under the tree on Christmas morning. We even do stockings.

Usually, my husband and I spend Christmas Eve evening with his family, and then, around 10 p.m., we drive across town to my family. If the stars are out, we drive kind of slow and, yes, we have been known to sing Christmas carols in the car. Luckily, he's as sappy about Christmas as I am.

Last year, we took my 3-year-old nephew to see Santa and buy gifts for his mom and dad. Santa was a little scary, and the Disney store was cool, but we spent most of the time riding the escalators. When you're three, stairs that move are pretty nifty.

And that's the best part of Christmas — being three years old, riding the escalator up and down, singing Christmas carols real loud in the cold of a winter night and waiting with your eyes squeezed shut for Santa to come down the chimney.

—Lori Safranek
Gateway Copy Editor

Decorating the Christmas tree

I don't know how the tradition started. My position as oldest grandchild must have made me the most likely candidate for decorating the Christmas tree.

My grandfather always picked out the tree, which was invariably lacking of branches and needles. But that set a bigger challenge for me, and the poor tree had a new home for a little while.

Every year the same box with the familiar contents was pulled out of the attic and proudly presented to me, along with the unspoken expectation to work wonders. I was fascinated with the candle lights and their bubbling oil. The old glass ornaments were handled with care because, of course, they were irreplaceable. And when the decorating was complete, the ceramic angel gently smiled down on it all.

Every year I received praises for the most beautifully decorated tree. And I felt special.

—Chris Felcks
Gateway Med Pulse Editor

Isn't a memory yet

My best holiday memory is not really yet a memory, because it is still happening. Let me explain ...

I either got the best Christmas present of my life early this year, or late last year — depending on how you look at it. Either way, it happened in April, when I met a very special man.

After our first nerve-racking date, we continued along the getting-to-know-each-other path.

Eventually, the walls around each of us began to crumble to reveal the long-entombed capacity to selflessly love another and allow someone the privilege of actually knowing the "you" (both good and bad) that exists inside you.

All the time spent divulging our deepest feelings, hurts, dreams, philosophies on life and the afterlife, memories and many other things which simply can't be labeled have resulted in a friendship which surpasses all others.

All this also has resulted in my best holiday memory — even though Christmas is not yet here — because to me he's New Year's, Valentine's Day, Saint Patrick's Day, the Fourth of July, Halloween, Christmas and especially Thanksgiving all rolled into one.

On Nov. 25, we drove over to a historical site in Council Bluffs which overlooks the lights of Omaha. It was extremely cold. He put one blanket around me and another under the one knee he knelt upon and ... I think you can fill in the rest.

If you need a clue, Oct. 3 will mark the beginning of a new holiday to add to our list.

—Deanne Nelson
Gateway On the Town Editor

Tradition make holiday special occasion

Tradition.

Christmas wouldn't be the same without it. You can see aspects of tradition down every street during the holidays.

Some evening, drive or walk down a residential street. Some houses will be aglow with lights and holiday cheer. Others will appear cold and stark.

If you are fortunate enough to glimpse into people's living room, you'll see Christmas trees of every size and description. Why so much difference? Tradition.

My parents used to decorate the outside of our house with multi-colored flashing lights. A plastic Santa Claus adorned our porch and two candles flanked each side of our garage, and in the living room's picture window—a glorious seven-foot blue spruce bedecked in silver garland and red glass beads.

Across the street in my old hometown the neighbors decorated their house in brilliant blue lights and trimmed their white flocked tree all in red.

Up the road you might see homes dressed in red and green lights or the crystal clear beauty of white lights.

And yet one home in particular didn't fall into the trappings of the so-called Christmas Consumerism. Her home showed no signs of Santa Claus or elves. No Christmas tree or trimmings were in sight. In one corner of their

living room, however, stood a humble nativity scene.

Their family and religious tradition called for a very sacred celebration of the holiday season. Every culture and religion has its own special way of celebrating. All of this stems from tradition.

We carry all of our childhood memories and traditions into the new relationships of adulthood. Blending old and new isn't always easy.

My family goes to midnight mass and has oyster stew on Christmas Eve. We open our presents sometimes on Christmas morning, sometimes on Christmas Eve. We're really very flexible when it comes time to opening presents.

A friend of mine said his family opens presents only on Christmas morning. I get the impression to do so otherwise would be sacrilegious.

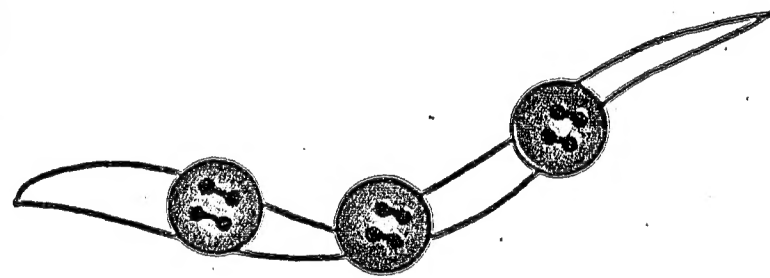
We give each other a few gifts to last through the year. My friend's gift list goes on for days.

My family has a real Christmas tree every year. My friend's family wouldn't give up their artificial number for anything.

Why so diverse a set of rituals for a holiday that comes once a year?

Tradition.

—Kim Hansen
Gateway Contributor



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—Tara Muir
Gateway Columnist

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—Patrick H.
Gateway Columnist

'Requiem' lives

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n Dec. 5, 1791—200 years and one day ago — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart died at the age of 35.

It is fitting that the UNO Concert Choir will join the Omaha Requiem Chorus, the Omaha Symphony and the University of Nebraska at Kearney Choralists in a performance of Mozart's Requiem, K. 626, Saturday night at the Orpheum Theater.

The concert, titled "Amadeus For Life," also will feature "Ave Verum Corpus, K. 618" and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Opus 92.

Cina Crisara, director of choral activities at UNO, directs two of the choirs which will be in the concert.

She said this is an important opportunity for her students.

"It is a special privilege for the students at UNO and a unique experience," she said. "Not everyone who goes off to college and sings with the choir can sing with a professional symphony orchestra in a place like the Orpheum."

Crisara said she and Bruce Hangen of the Omaha Symphony met prior to any rehearsals to arrive at a unity of vision in preparing this performance.

"It's my job to teach the singers to do the work the way he would like it done. That's the job of a chorus master," she said. "Then, during the performances, it's all in his hands."

In addition to the UNO Concert Choir, Crisara will also lead the Omaha Requiem Chorus, a community choir which includes KVNO's Frank Bramhall, UNO Associate Professor of Chemistry Eric Manley, and James Thorson, chairperson of gerontology. The chorus also includes several alumni from the UNO Choir, she said.

Mozart's Requiem, Crisara said, remains one of the most popular choral works in existence.

"There's a lot of drama in it, and a lot of beauty. You don't get tired of it. You discover new things in it every time you hear it or perform it," she said.

Tickets for the 8 p.m. concert are available at the Omaha Symphony Box Office, 1615 Howard St., Suite 310. They also are available by calling STUBS, 397-8823 and TIX, 342-7107 and at the door. Student discounts are offered.

—Elizabeth Tape

'A Lump of Coal' actually a gem

R

emember when your parents said Santa was watching you? It not only instilled childhood paranoia, but also a new element of fear. Because if you were bad, Santa would leave a lump of coal in your stocking.

Well, we're in college now and the fear of coal should be a thing of the past. It has been — until now. Thanks to First Warning Records, the legendary lump of coal

has been turned into a CD. A Christmas CD, no less.

"A Lump of Coal" is the latest in holiday entertainment. It's a combination of the best alternative bands on the charts and traditional, or not so traditional, holiday classics. The cover art is the first indication of what this disc is all about.

The Hoodoo Gurus start things off with their version of "Little Drummer Boy" (Up the Khyber). It's a sitar-laden track — yes, sitar — that turns into a tongue-in-cheek "spaghetti western" musical. The band should have included it on its last album, "Kinky," because it surely would have fit.

Crash Test Dummies is a new band currently cracking the college music charts. It takes on "The First Noel" and creates a small comic masterpiece. The comedy is created by Brad Robert's deep voice croaking through the first few stanzas. The rest is a heavenly choir of voice samples done by Ellen Reid.

Drunken Boat is another new college band climbing the music charts. It supplies a new version of "Blue X-mas (to whom it may concern)" and focuses the attention of the holiday on the less fortunate. Although the song is kind of a downer, it is a good reminder to give during the holiday season.

Divine Weeks and the Primitives have been around for a few years and their talent shines through on the tracks they offer. "O Holy Night" from Divine Weeks comes off sounding a lot like a track for U2's "The Joshua Tree," especially in Bill See's vocals.

Meanwhile, the Primitives offer a jangly guitar version of "Silent Night." Tracy Tracy's voice is perfect for this song. She does it more than justice in her own pop-like way.

The Odds are another new band, but one would never guess from the way it interprets "Kings of Orient." The band pulls off a very soulful version that would fit perfectly on a Motown Christmas album. It's nice to hear this song in a whole new way.

Clockhammer isn't the jazzy club band that "Here Comes Santa Claus" makes it seem to be. In fact, this is nothing compared to what the band's original material sounds like. This is definitely the best track on the CD. No word on what co-writer Gene Autrey thinks of this new version of his old hit.



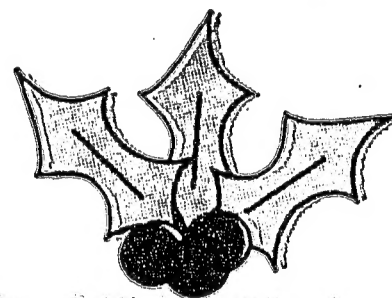
—First Warning Records

The alternative music Christmas compilation "A Lump of Coal."

No Christmas would be complete without "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," and this collection is no exception. Doing the honors is none other than Henry Rollins. With a walking bass line and sound effects of guns firing and helicopters, Rollins recites this Christmas classic in an almost frightening manner. Just the way he says "brains" makes me shiver.

"A Lump of Coal" is in record stores now, so don't wait to start the holidays right. It's a collection that won't soon be forgotten. Nor will the placement of Santa's reindeer on the cover.

—Todd Thompson



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Union Station celebrates holiday

To experience the sight of a Christmas tree larger than would ever fit through your front door, much less stand up in your living room, visit the Western Heritage Museum.

"Christmas at Union Station," an annual holiday celebration begun in 1975, features an enormous tree decked out in holiday finery, as well as many holiday entertainment options. The celebration will run through Dec. 22.

Something different this year is that the tree was donated by an Omaha couple, Mr. and Mrs. William Humphrey, and hails from Omaha Union Pacific Railroad, which traditionally sponsors bringing the tree to the museum, cut the tree down and transported it to its spot in the museum, said Marilyn Jensen, public relations director.

Jensen said another new feature of "Christmas at Union Station" this year is the "Ethnic Nights" program, detailing how people from different ethnic groups celebrate the holidays. Traditions of Italians, Scandinavians and Czechs are showcased in this event on separate Thursday nights, she said. The event will include folk dancing, music, craft demonstrations and craft items.

Annual activities being offered again this year include an opportunity to visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, holiday entertainment involving local church choirs and dancers, and special treats such as peppermint sundaes at the restored soda fountain.

Jensen said although the annual "Christmas at Union Station" event began when the museum opened in 1975, the idea for it came from a tradition which goes back to when the museum was actually Union Station. From 1931 to 1971, Union Pacific would bring in a large tree and carolers to entertain travelers passing through the station during the holiday season, she said.

The museum, located at 801 S. 10th St., is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday from 1-5 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit Saturday from 12:30 to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1-5 p.m.

Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2.50 for senior citizens, \$2 for children 5-12, and free for museum members and children under 5. Instant photos of children with Santa are available for \$2 each.

—Deanne Nelson

Holiday brings on blahs

Your last final ends at 2 p.m., just in time to stop at the mall and buy the last of your presents. Then you have to rush home and trim the tree.

Except you get a flat tire, they're out of the Mutant Ninja Turtle Underoos you were going to buy for your little brother, and the whole family's furious when you get home because you're holding up the tinsel throwing.

By the end of the day, you find yourself sitting alone in your room, feeling depressed and disappointed.

According to Dr. Todd Hendrickson, a psychiatrist with Creighton/Nebraska Department of Psychiatry, this situation is not uncommon during the holidays.

"Finishing Christmas shopping, socializing and entertaining, fulfilling family expectations, over-indulging and doing all of it on a tight budget can take its toll," Hendrickson said.

Hendrickson said although the belief that more people get depressed at Christmastime is a myth, more people do seek help for those feelings during the holidays than at other times of the year.

The number of suicide attempts increases at this time, also, Hendrickson said.

"It's just a classically focussed time—it's socially acceptable to spend time around your family," he said. This increased amount of family time can compound negative feelings and problems, he said.

Hendrickson said the holidays can produce different problems for college students than for other people.

"My impression is there is a little bit of difference. I guess the best word would be vulnerability," he said. "It's one of those times

they call 'life phase stressers.' Going to college and being away from home is a major stresser for young people.

"I think most college students do a very good job (of handling stress)," Hendrickson said. "But for some young people, it comes to 'where do I turn?'"

For college students, family get-togethers can remind them of their own worries about the future, he said.

"There's a tremendous expectation from others for what you do. 'What are you going to do with the rest of your life?' It seems to be much more pressure then. Grades come out then. You kind of have to be accountable for what you've been doing."

Hendrickson stressed that, for many college students, the holidays are a good experience.

"For the majority of young people, it's a great time," he said. "I think it's a kind of healthy thing, the Christmas break. Number one, it gives you time out to refocus. Obviously, there's less stress on your academic life."

He said some students also work during the break to earn extra money, while some use the time to travel. Many students take the opportunity to spend time with their families.

"I think most people feel a sense of security when they get to spend time with their families. It's fun," he said.

The same situation that make some people feel secure can create feelings of depression.

"For others, it just reinforces the negative feelings, it things weren't going well," he said.

UNO students who want to seek help with depression this Christmas can get free help through the Counseling Center, Room 113 of the Eppley Building.

—Lori Safranek

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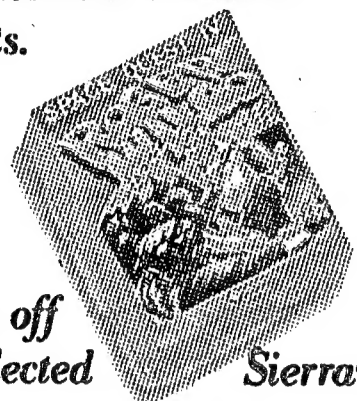
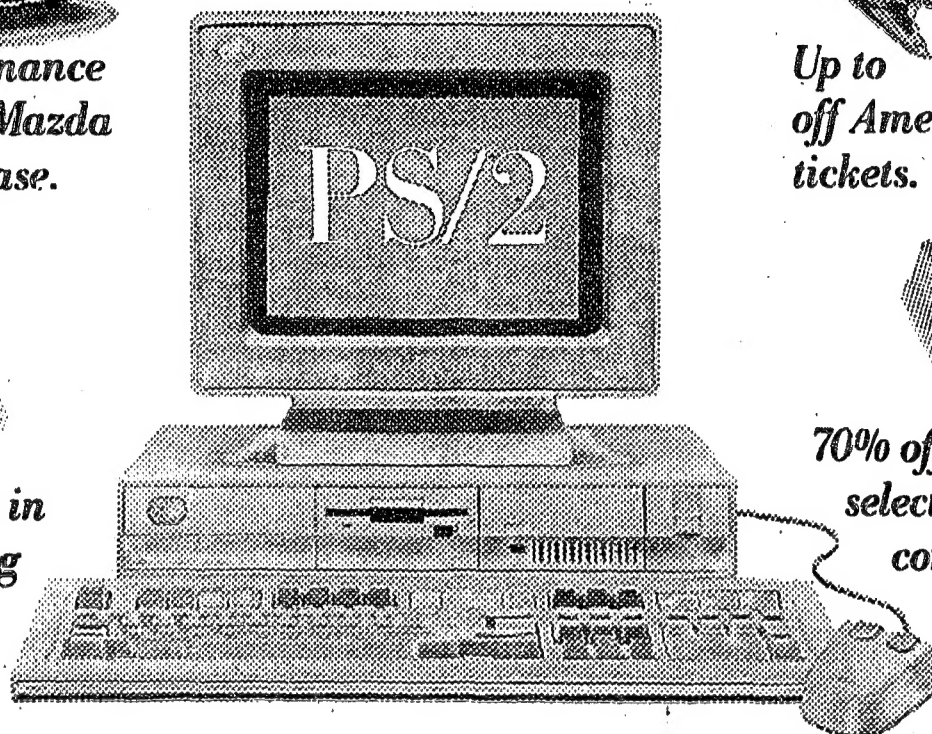
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